

## Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION NEA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 PM-03 CIAE-00

DODE-00 SAM-01 IO-03 INR-05 RSC-01 /039 W

----- 023626

P R 310720Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 737

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 MUSCAT 927

LIMDIS

NOFORN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MOPS, MPOL, PINS, MU, IR, JO

SUBJECT: DHOFAR SITUATION AT YEAR'S END

REF: MUSCAT 857

SUMMARY. AT YEAR'S END, PROGRESS IN CAMPAIGN AGAINST PFLO REBELS IS ABOUT ONE MONTH BEHIND TARGET DATES ESTABLISHED EARLIER BY CSAF CREASEY. PROMPTED BY SETBACKS SUCH AS THOSE DESCRIBED IN REFTEL, TACTICS HAVE BEEN MODIFIED AND OBJECTIVES FOR IRANIAN TROOPS CHANGED. IRANIANS HAVE SUFFERED DISPROPORTIONATELY HIGH NUMBER OF CASUALTIES, ATTRIBUTED BY CREASEY PRIMARILY TO THEIR INEXPERIENCE AND TO SOME LACK OF LEADERSHIP AND DISCIPLINE. IRANIAN AIRCRAFT AND JORDANIAN BATTALION EXPECTED SHORTLY. END SUMMARY.

1. COMMANDER OF SULTAN'S ARMED FORCES (CSAF), GENERAL CREASEY, BRIEFED CHARGE DEC. 30 ON STATUS OF CURRENT CAMPAIGN. CSAF EVINced SOME DISAPPOINTMENT WITH PROGRESEMM ALTHOUGH HE DID NOT SAY AS MUCH, IT WAS APPARENT THAT HIS EARLIER HOPES ABOUT FORCING PFLO INTO EARLY DECISIVE BATTLE HAVE DIMMED

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SOMEWHAT.

2. FOLLOWING DEC. 5 CLASH (REFTEL), IRANIANS WITHDREW IN DIRECTION OF MANSTON, MINING ROUTE OF RETREAT (AND THUS FORCING USE OF MORE DIFFICULT TERRAIN BY FRIENDLY FORCES IN FUTURE OPERATIONS IN THAT AREA). CSAF, AFTER TWO VISITS TO LOCALE, ORDERED IRANIANS TO CAPTURE POSITION KNOWN AS EVEREST (ABOUT 11 KILOMETERS EAST OF SHIRISHITTI--COORD 16-47 N, 53-20 E). AT FIRST, IRANIAN COMMANDER, GENERAL KHORASAND (SPELLING IS PHONETIC) BALKED, SAYING THAT OBJECTIVE WAS TOO DIFFICULT (EVEN THOUGH BRITISH-OFFICERED FIRQA HAD GONE BY FOOT TO EVEREST DAY BEFORE WITHOUT ENCOUNTERING RESISTANCE). AFTER CSAF'S ORDERS CONFIRMED BY IRANIAN COUNTERPART, GENERAL AZHARI, KHORASAND MOVED. (INCIDENTALLY, CSAF STATED HE CLEARS ALL SUCH ORDERS IN ADVANCE WITH AZHARI.)

3. AFTER SECURING EVEREST WITHOUT RESISTANCE, IRANIANS NEXT WERE SLATED TO TAKE TWO PARALLEL RIDGES ABOVE PFLO COASTAL "CAPITAL" OF RAKHYUT. AFTER SOME HESITATION, THEY MOVED. IN CHRISTMAS DAY OPERATION, ONE COMPANY STARTED DOWN EITHER RIDGE. THAT ON EASTERN ELEVATION MADE CONTACT WITH ENEMY IN AFTERNOON. AS IN DEC. 5 SET-TO, IRANIANS DUG

IN RATHER THAN RETURNING DELIBERATE COUNTERFIRE. EMBOLDENED BY THEIR SUCCESS IN PINNING DOWN IRANIANS, PFLO MADE TWO SUCCESSIVE ATTACKS FROM CLOSER IN. BEFORE CONTACT BROKEN OFF, PFLO (CSAF ESTIMATED STRENGTH AT ABOUT 15) HAD KILLED NINE IRANIANS.

4. AT ABOUT 0400 ON DEC. 26, PRESUMABLY SAME PFLO FORCE ATTACKED STATIONARY IRANIAN POSITIONS ON WESTERN RIDGE. SAME PATTERN OF FIGHTING PERTAINED. AT ONE POINT, SMALL SAF CONTINGENT (ONE BRITISH OFFICER AND TWO SORKE) SORTIED FROM FIXED POSITION TO TRY TO GET AT ATTACKERS. UNFORTUNATELY, ALL THREE WERE SHOT, BRITISHER WHEN HE WENT TO AID ONE OF FIRQA WHO WAS HIT FIRST. WHEN ONE WOUNDED FIRQA GOT BACK TO IRANIAN POSITION AND URGED THAT FALLEN COMRADES BE RESCUED, HE WAS REBUFFED. INSTEAD, IRANIANS LEFT THEM OUT. CSAF DOES NOT KNOW WHETHER TWO WERE KILLED OR MERELY WOUNDED TO BE TAKEN BY PFLO AND PERHAPS TORTURED. AT ANY RATE, THIS FAILURE TO RETRIEVE KIA AND WIA IS BECOMING SOMETHING OF A MORALE SECRET

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FACTOR, EVEN AMONG SAF--THIS IS FIRST TIME A BRITISH OFFICER HAS BEEN LOST IN THIS WAY. IRANIANS FINALLY WITHDREW, LEAVING BEHIND AN ADDITIONAL SIX OF THEIR OWN KIA, INCLUDING A BATTALION AND A COMPANY COMMANDER. THEY LATER BLAMED WITHDRAWAL ON DECIMATED SAF DETACHMENT\*

5. ON DEC. 29, AND FOLLOWING RATHER STIFF ORDERS FROM CREASEY, IRANIANS MOVED HELICOPTER-BORNE TROOPS INTO POSITION

ON WESTERN RIDGE. TWO KIA DURING OPERATION. AS OF NOW, THEY ARE HOLDING--ABOUT 200 TROOPS ON WESTERN RIDGE AND 100 ON EASTERN. CREASEY HOPES THAT WITHIN NEXT FEW DAYS THEY WILL COMPLETE TASK AND TAKE RAKHYUT. ONCE THIS IS ACHIEVED, IRANIANS WILL BE TASKED WITH HOLDING POSITIONS THEY HAVE TAKEN.

6. MELNWHILE, SETBACKS HAVE NECESSITATED CHANGES IN CSAF'S PLANNING. HE IS WITHDRAWING ONE SAF BATTALION FROM EAST OF HORNBEAM LINE, LEAVING SECOND BATTALION TO COVER ENTIRE CENTRAL AND EASTERN SECTORS (WHERE SPORADIC ACTIVITY CONTINUES). BATTALION BEING SHIFTED WILL MOVE INTO REGION EAST AND SOUTH OF MANSTON WITH OBJECTIVE OF TAKING AREA CENTERED ON SHIRISHITTI. CSAF WILL HAVE TO SUPPORT THIS FORCE BY DIVERTING HELICOPTERS FROM SIMBA RE-SUPPLY. THIS LOGISTICS CONSIDERATION WILL LIMIT OPERATIONS TO ABOUT 21 DAYS--AFTER WHICH HELICOPTERS WILL HAVE TO REDEPLOY IN FAVOR OF SIMBA (WHERE SUPPLIES WILL HAVE BEEN DRAWN DOWN TO MINIMUM ACCEPTABLE 20-DAY LEVEL). PLANS CALL FOR THIS OPERATION TO GET UNDERWAY JAN. 4, JUST ONE MONTH AFTER DATE ON WHICH CSAF HAD HOPED IRANIANS WOULD CAPTURE SHIRISHITTI. CSAF ESTIMATES PFLO IN AREA TO NUMBER ABOUT 150. GIVEN PFLO SUCCESSES AGAINST IRANIANS TO DATE, CSAF IS NOT SURE ENEMY WILL CHOOSE TO STAND AGAINST SAF.

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INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 PM-03 INR-05

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P R 310720Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 738

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

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LIMDIS

NOFORN

7. CSAF FRANKLY ADMITTED THAT IRANIANS HAVE SUFFERED HIGH NUMBER OF CASUALTIES--ABOUT 70, ALMOST EVENLY DIVIDED BETWEEN KIA AND WIA--SINCE CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED DEC. 2. THIS HAS LED TO A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF GROUSING ON PART OF SOME IRANIANS, BUT CSAF CONFIDENT THAT GENERAL AZHARI AND SHAH DO NOT SHARE ANY SUCH DISSATISFACTION. FURTHER, CSAF DOES NOT BELIEVE THAT NUMBER OF CASUALTIES TRULY REFLECTS EITHER THE STRENGTH OF OPPOSITION (HE ESTIMATES ABOUT 120 PFLO IN REGION WHERE IRANIANS HAVE BEEN MOVING) OR LEVEL OF COMBAT--PFLO HAS HAD VERY FEW CASUALTIES.

8. BODY OF SOLDIER EARLIER REPORTED TO HAVE BEEN CAPTURED ON DEC. 5 HAS NOW BEEN RECOVERED. PFLO STRIPPED BODIES AND NOW POSSESS SEVERAL IRANIAN ARMY UNIFORMS AND WEAPONS (CSAF UNCERTAIN WHAT MANUFACTURE OF LATTER MIGHT BE). THESE ITEMS COULD BE USED IN FUTURE INFILTRATION EXERCISES.

9. CSAF HAS BEEN VISITED RECENTLY BY TWO HIGH-RANKING IRANIAN GENERALS. THE FIRST, GENERAL HOZUK (PHONETIC SPELLING) WAS PREDISPOSED TO REMOVE BRIGADIER KHORASAND IF CSAF SO RECOMMENDED. CSAF FEELS THAT KHORASAND IS "NO  
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BETTER AND NO WORSE" THAN ANY PROSPECTIVE REPLACEMENT. RATHER THAN INTRODUCE ELEMENT OF CONCEIVABLE TENSION BETWEEN OMANIS AND IRANIANS (OR EVEN BETWEEN BRITISH AND IRANIANS), HE EXPRESSED SATISFACTION WITH KHORASAND, WHOSE PRINCIPAL WEAKNESS SEEMS TO BE PROPENSITY TO "COMMAND BY COMMITTEE".

10. A SECOND VISITOR WAS LT GENERAL HASHEM HODJAT, THE SENIOR INSPECTING OFFICER ON SUPREME COMMANDER'S STAFF, IRANIAN ARMED FORCES. HODJAT RELAYED REQUEST FROM SHAH THAT IRANIAN AIR FORCE BE PERMITTED TO USE NAPALM; CSAF DENIED THIS REQUEST, BOTH BECAUSE OF POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS AND BECAUSE USE WOULD NOT BURN OFF TREE COVER AS HOPED FOR BY IRANIANS. HODJAT PRESSED CREASEY FOR FRANK EVALUATION OF IRANIAN PERFORMANCE. CREASEY DEMURRED; HE IS LEARY OF OFFENDING IRANIANS JUST AS HE IS DISCOURAGED BY THEIR APPARENT FAILURE TO LEARN FROM MISTAKES. HE SUGGESTED TO HODJAT THAT IRANIAN TRAINING TEAM VISIT DHOFAR FROM TIME TO TIME AND THEN DRAW ITS OWN CONCLUSIONS. HODJAT AGREED THIS WOULD BE A GOOD IDEA. (CREASEY HOPES TO VISIT TEHRAN FOR A FEW DAYS BEFORE HE RELINQUISHES COMMAND IN FEBRUARY.)

11. HODJAT ASKED TO RELAY CSAF REQUEST TO SHAH FOR USE OF IRANIAN AIRCRAFT TO TAKE OUT PDRY GUN POSITIONS WHICH HAVE KEPT UP HIGH-LEVEL OF FIRE ON SIMBA. THIS WOULD BE DONE AFTER "DUE NOTICE" GIVEN--I.E. RADIO WARNINGS TO PDRY THAT RETALL-

IATION ON HAWF WOULD FOLLOW IF ATTACKS CONTINUED. USE OF IRANIAN CAT'S PAW IN SUCH AN OVERT CROSS-BORDER OPERATION EVIDENTLY ENTAILS MANAGEABLE POLITICAL RISK IN CSAF'S JUDGMENT.

12. CSAF REPORTED THAT AIRFIELD AT MIDWAY WILL BE COMPLETED BY JAN. 1. HOWEVER, COMMUNICATIONS AND RADAR INSTALLATIONS STILL HAVE TO BE CHECKED OUT. HENCE, HE IS URGING DELAY ON ARRIVAL OF IRANIAN F-5'S--NOW SCHEDULED, ACCORDING TO HIS INFORMATION, FOR JAN. 7 (SEE TEHRAN'S 10433). INCIDENTALLY, CSAF HAS HIGHER REGARD FOR IRANIAN AIR FORCE THAN FOR ARMY.

13. ON QUESTION OF JORDANIAN BATTALION, CSAF ANTICIPATES ARRIVAL ON OR ABOUT FEB. 8 (I.E. SHORTLY AFTER HIS DEPARTURE). IRAN HAS AGREED "IN PRINCIPLE" TO PROVIDE C-130 TRANSPORT. WHEN THEY ARRIVE, JORDANIANS WILL BE ATTACHED  
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DIRECTLY TO SAF DHOFAR BRIGADE, THEREBY (HOPEFULLY) OBVIATING SOME OF COMMAND DIFFICULTIES WHICH HAVE COMPLICATED OPERATIONS WITH IRANIANS.

14. BECAUSE HE WAS MORE THAN USUALLY CRITICAL OF IRANIAN ALLIES, CSAF SPECIFICALLY REQUESTED THAT HIS COMMENTS BE HELD CLOSELY.  
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## Message Attributes

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